

Italy, Nepal, Nigeria, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Spain, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Switzerland, Turkey, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkmenistan, U.K., U.S.A., Uganda, Vietnam and Yemen.

Intelligence agencies and field formations of Customs are alert to detect and prevent smuggling of goods and violations of Customs Act. Strict vigil is being maintained at all International Airports/ports and sensitive areas of the borders to prevent smuggling and apprehend the offenders including foreigners. Specific measures taken include surveillance and use of sophisticated equipments like metal detectors, colour baggage X-Ray machines at Airports/ports and Land Customs Stations. A number of vehicles have been provided for anti smuggling operations throughout the country. Further, two helicopters have been positioned since July, 1996 in the West Coast for Anti-smuggling work cum surveillances. Training is being imparted to the officers to improve their skills and abilities.

All cases of smuggling and violations of Customs Act/ Rules which are detected are followed up by proper and timely investigation adjudication, and prosecution against all accused including foreign nationals.

[Translation]

Decline in National Savings

*454. SHRI JAGATVIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether various savings schemes launched by the Government have received a serious set back due to high interest rates offered by Private Companies and financial institutions;

(b) whether a decline of 11 percent in National Savings Schemes has been registered alone during the current year in comparison to last year;

(c) whether Government rates in all deposit schemes are half to one and a half percent lower than the rates offered by the Private Companies and institutions; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBRAM) : (a) and (b) No Sir. The gross collections in the various small savings Schemes launched by the Government of India show an increasing trend over the years. The actual figures for 1996-97 are not yet available.

(c) The Small Savings Schemes launched by Government of India are not comparable with the Schemes offered by Private Companies/Institutions. Each saving instrument is designed to cater to different requirements of small savers.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Organisation of Islamic Countries

*455. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that organisation of Islamic countries at its meeting held on March 24, 1997 have agreed to support Pakistan on its Kashmir Policies and in liberating Kashmir from India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the name of countries who attended the meetings and signed the declaration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b) The OIC at a Special Summit in Islamabad on March 23, 1997 adopted a Special Declaration on Jammu & Kashmir. This document makes observations about J & K and calls for action which echoes Pakistan's well-known views on the issue.

(c) The meeting was attended by OIC countries, whose names are given in the attached Statement.

Statement

1. Jordan
2. Azerbaijan
3. Afghanistan (seat vacant)
4. Albania
5. United Arab Emirates
6. Indonesia
7. Uganda
8. Iran
9. Pakistan
10. Bahrain
11. Brunei Darussalam
12. Burkina Faso
13. Bangladesh
14. Benin
15. Turkey
16. Chad
17. Tunisia
18. Gabon
19. Gambia
20. Algeria
21. Comoros
22. Djibouti
23. Saudi Arabia